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**MULTILAYER ELECTRONIC PART AND
METHOD OF PRODUCING THE SAME**

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

5 The present invention relates to a multilayer electronic part, a method of producing the multilayer electronic part, and more particularly, to a multilayer electronic part (and a method of producing same) in which a plurality of outer electrodes are disposed on only the main surfaces of a multilayer body, and an end face of the multilayer body serves as a mounting surface for mounting the part on a mounting substrate.

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2. Description of the Related Art

15 Multilayer electronic parts which utilize chip capacitors and chip inductors are essential in obtaining miniaturization and higher performance of electronic devices. There is a demand for increased density and performance of such devices and, in response to this demand, a chip capacitor has been proposed in Japanese Patent Publication No. 57-56217.

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FIG. 5 is a perspective view of such a chip capacitor 50. Chip capacitor 50 comprises a multilayer body 52 composed of a plurality of stacked sheet layers 51 made of ceramics; inner electrodes 53 made of copper or the like inside the multilayer body 52; and outer electrodes 54 disposed on an end face of the multilayer body 52. In this case, the inner electrodes 53 are connected to the outer electrodes 54 by lead electrodes 55 formed at the ends of the inner electrodes 53.

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Although not shown, the end face of the multilayer body 52 where the outer electrodes 54 are disposed serves as a mounting surface of the chip capacitor 50, and the chip capacitor 50 is mounted on a printed board by connecting the outer electrodes 54 to a pad on the printed board using solder or the like.

In multilayer electronic parts employing the above-described conventional chip capacitor, however, since the outer electrodes are formed on the end face of the multilayer body, it is necessary, in producing the chip capacitor, to cut a mother multilayer body into individual multilayer bodies and to subsequently form outer electrodes on an end face, which is the cutting face, of the individual multilayer bodies.

As a result, the following problems arise:

1) The production process is complicated and, therefore, the production cost is high.

2) The cutting surface is not sufficiently flat, and it is difficult to narrow a resultant space between the outer electrodes.

3) It is impossible to measure the characteristics of individual multilayer electronic parts in the assembled state.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

To overcome the above described problems, preferred embodiments of the present invention provide a multilayer electronic part that allows low production costs and narrowing of the space between outer electrodes, and a method of producing the multilayer electronic part.

One embodiment of the present invention provides a multilayer electronic part comprising: a

multilayer body composed of a plurality of stacked sheet layers made of ceramics, said plurality of stacked sheet layers defining a stacking direction substantially perpendicular to a main surface of each of said plurality of stacked sheet layers; a plurality of inner electrodes and connecting means provided inside said multilayer body; and a plurality of outer electrodes disposed on only a main surface of said multilayer body so as to be electrically connected to any of said inner electrodes via said connecting means, and said multilayer body further comprising a mounting surface so that said multilayer body is mounted at said mounting surface, said mounting surface being substantially parallel to said stacking direction.

Another embodiment of the present invention provides a method of producing a multilayer electronic part comprising the steps of: preparing a plurality of mother sheet layers made of ceramics; forming inner electrodes and connecting means on any one of said plurality of mother sheet layers; forming a mother multilayer body by stacking and press-bonding said plurality of mother sheet layers; forming an outer electrode on only a main surface of said mother multilayer body so as to be electrically connected to any one of said inner electrodes via said connecting means; cutting said mother multilayer body into a multilayer body having said inner electrode, said outer electrode, and said connecting means; and baking said mother multilayer body or said multilayer body.

According to the multilayer electronic part of the present invention, since the outer electrode is disposed on only the main surface of the base plate, it can be formed such that the mother multilayer body is not

yet cut in the process of producing the multilayer electronic part.

According to the method of producing a multilayer electronic part of the present invention, since the method includes the step of forming outer electrodes on the main surface of the mother multilayer body, it is possible to narrow the space between the outer electrodes.

Further objects, features, and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following description of the preferred embodiments with reference to the attached drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is an exploded perspective view of a multilayer electronic part according to a first embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional view showing the multilayer electronic part of FIG. 1 mounted on a mounting substrate.

FIGS. 3A to 3D are cross-sectional views illustrating a method of producing the multilayer electronic part shown in FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is an exploded perspective view showing a multilayer electronic part according to a second embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 5 is a sectional view of a prior art chip capacitor.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

FIG. 1 is an exploded perspective view showing a multilayer electronic part according to a first embodiment of the present invention. A chip capacitor 10

is a multilayer electronic component and includes a multilayer body 11 composed of a plurality of stacked sheet layers 12a to 12f made of ceramics. The chip capacitor also includes capacitor electrodes 13a to 13e serving as inner electrodes disposed within the multilayer body 11; via hole electrodes 14 serving as connectors; and outer electrodes 15a and 15b disposed on only the main surfaces 11a and 11b of the multilayer body 11 such that they are electrically connected to the capacitor electrodes 13a and 13e via the via hole electrodes 14.

In this case, the capacitor electrodes 13a, 13c, and 13e, and the capacitor electrodes 13b and 13d are electrically connected via the via hole electrodes 14, respectively.

FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional view showing the chip capacitor 10 of FIG. 1 mounted on a mounting substrate. The chip capacitor 10 is mounted on a printed board 1, which serves as a mounting substrate, by connecting the outer electrodes 15a and 15b to a wiring pattern 2 on the printed board 1 using, e.g., solder 3. A lengthwise end face 11c of the multilayer body 11 of the chip capacitor 10 is used as a mounting surface.

FIGS. 3A to 3D are cross-sectional views which will be used in explaining a method of producing the chip capacitor 10 shown in FIG. 1.

First, a plurality of mother sheet layers 21a to 21f made of ceramics are prepared (FIG. 3A).

Next, through holes 22 are formed in the mother sheet layers 21 to 21f by way of, for example, punching, and the capacitor electrodes 13a to 13e are formed on the mother sheet layers 21b to 21f, respectively, for example by screen-printing conductive paste thereon. Further,

the via hole electrodes 14 are formed by disposing
conductive paste in the through holes 22 (FIG. 3B).

After a mother multilayer body 23 is formed by
laying the plurality of mother sheet layers 21a to 21f on
5 top of one another, conductive paste is screen-printed on
only the main surfaces 23a and 23b of the mother
multilayer body 23 such that the outer electrodes 15a and
15b are formed thereon. In this case, the capacitor
electrodes 13a to 13e on the mother sheet layers 21b to
10 21f, and the outer electrodes 15a and 15b on the main
surfaces 23a and 23b of the mother multilayer body 23 are
connected via the via hole electrodes 14. Since the
mother multilayer body 23 has not yet been subjected to
cutting, the main surfaces 23a and 23b thereof with outer
15 electrodes 15a and 15b have a high level of flatness
(FIG. 3C).

Next, the mother multilayer 11, provided with
the capacitor electrodes 13a to 13e therein and the outer
electrodes 15a and 15b on the main surfaces 23a and 23b
20 thereof, is cut into blocks, each of which is to become a
separate multilayer body 11. Subsequently, the
multilayer body 11, the capacitor electrodes 13a to 13e,
the via hole electrodes 14, and the outer electrodes 15a
and 15b are baked together (FIG. 3D).

25 According to the above-described production
method, the chip capacitor 10 is completed, which has the
capacitor electrodes 13a to 13e inside the multilayer
body 11, and the outer electrodes 15a and 15b formed on
only the main surfaces 11a and 11b of the multilayer body
30 11.

FIG. 4 is an exploded perspective view of a
multilayer electronic part according to a second
embodiment of the present invention. A chip inductor 30

is a multilayer electronic component and includes a multilayer body 31 composed of a plurality of stacked sheet layers 32a to 32f made of ceramics; inductor electrodes 33a to 33e serving as inner electrodes
5 disposed inside the multilayer body 31; via hole electrodes 34 serving as connectors; and outer electrodes 35a and 35b formed on only the main surfaces 31a and 31b of the multilayer body 31 such that they are electrically connected to any of the inductor electrodes 33a and 33e
10 via the via hole electrodes 34.

In this case, the inductor electrodes 33a and 33b, the inductor electrodes 33b and 33c, the inductor electrodes 33c and 33d, and the inductor electrodes 33d and 33e are electrically connected, respectively, by the
15 via hole electrodes 34 formed at one end of the inductor electrodes 33a and 33e.

Although not shown, the chip inductor 30 is mounted on a printed board (serving as a mounting substrate) by connecting the outer electrodes 35a and 35b
20 to a wiring pattern on the printed board (e.g., using solder). A lengthwise end face 31c of the multilayer body 31 of the chip inductor 30 is used as a mounting surface, in a manner similar to that of the chip capacitor 10 of the first embodiment shown in FIG. 1.

25 The chip inductor 30 is produced using a method substantially similar to the production method of the chip capacitor 10 illustrated in FIGS. 3A to 3D.

While a chip capacitor or a chip inductor is used as the multilayer electronic part in the above
30 embodiments, the present invention is also applicable to, for example, a chip resistor, a condenser (capacitor) array part, an inductor array part, or a resistor array part having a plurality of condensers, a plurality of

inductors, and/or a plurality of resistors formed inside a multilayer body, and an LCR composite part having a condenser, an inductor, and a resistor formed inside a multilayer body.

5 While the mother multilayer body is cut into blocks serving as multilayer bodies before the multilayer body, the inner electrodes, the connectors, and the outer electrodes are baked together in the above-described production method, it may alternatively be cut into
10 blocks after being baked together.

 According to the multilayer electronic part of the present invention, since outer electrodes are formed on only the main surfaces of the base plate, they can be formed before the mother multilayer body is cut in the
15 process of producing the multilayer electronic part. This makes it possible to simplify the production process and to reduce the production cost. As a result, it is possible to achieve a low-cost multilayer electronic part.

20 In accordance with the invention, the characteristics of individual multilayer electronic parts can be measured when the parts are combined in an assembly and, therefore, inspection can be completed in a short time, and the time necessary for the production
25 process can be reduced.

 According to the method of producing a multilayer electronic part of the present invention, the step of forming outer electrodes on the main surfaces of the mother multilayer body results in a high level of
30 flatness before cutting and, therefore, it is possible to narrow any space between the outer electrodes, thereby reducing the size of the multilayer electronic parts produced according to the method.

Furthermore, since the outer electrodes can be formed precisely, it is possible to improve the yield of multilayer electronic parts, and to thereby reduce the costs thereof.

5 While the present invention has been described with reference to what are presently considered to be the preferred embodiments, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited to the disclosed embodiments. On the contrary, the invention is intended to cover
10 various modifications and equivalent arrangements included within the spirit and scope of the appended claims. The scope of the following claims is to be accorded the broadest interpretation so as to encompass all such modifications and equivalent structures and
15 functions.